

May 3, 1951.

Professor Quastler,  
Department of Physics,  
University of Illinois,  
Urbana, Illinois.

Dear Dr. Quastler:

Thank you for your invitation to participate in a seminar of your Automatic Control Systems group at Urbana this summer. At the instant I am not able to name a date at which I will be free to visit, but will keep your invitation in mind, and let you know as soon as my plans are crystallized.

From the little that I could infer from your letter concerning the objectives of your group, I suspect that you are probably in a better position to suggest solutions for biological problems, most of which are so obvious as to be difficult, than the biologist is in bringing up concrete successful reaction systems.

I would be very much interested to learn who are the local biologists whom you refer to as participants in your group, and precisely who the people are that you contemplate my discussing biological problems with during the gaps between the formal sessions. May I also take it for granted that all of the discussions will be confined to areas which are not now nor likely to become liable to security classification? If my remarks were to be recorded, I can foresee the possibility that the record itself might be unwontedly included in a blanket classification of documents bearing on your project, at some later date. For this reason, I have some reservations about the recording, and would greatly prefer that it were dispensed with, unless it is an indispensable condition for the success of your seminar.

We are prepared to cope with security problems as the necessity arises, but that is an area which I should not wish to enter heedlessly or casually.

Yours sincerely,

Joshua Lederberg,  
Associate Professor of Genetics